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Message Text

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16
ACTION INR-07

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1099
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 0675

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, NO, IT
SUBJECT: BIO INFORMATION ON NORWAY'S AMBASSADOR GUNNENG

REF: ROME 1917

1. AMBASSADOR ARNE GUNNENG IS ONE OF NORWAY'S MOST DISTINGUISHED AND RESPECTED DIPLOMAT. HE HAS HELD THE PRINCIPAL POSTS IN NORWAY'S CAREER SERVICE, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON WHERE HE SERVED FROM 1966 TO 1973. HE IS CONSIDERED ONE OF NORWAY'S LEADING PROMOTERS OF NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN TIES, STEMMING FROM HIS EXPERIENCE IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE, AND HIS ASSIGNMENTS TO WASHINGTON. HIS ELDEST DAUGHTER IS MARRIED TO A U.S. FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER SERVING IN STOCKHOLM AND HIS YOUNGEST DAUGHTER HAS RETURNED TO THE U.S. TO CONTINUE HER STUDIES

2. GENNENG WAS BORN IN 1914 IN OSLO, SON OF A BUSINESSMAN. HE GRADUATED WITH A LAW DEGREE FROM OSLO UNIVERSITY IN 1937. HE STUDIED INTERNATIONAL LAW AND POLITICAL SCIENCE IN LONDON AND RETURNED TO NORWAY IN 1939-40 AS A DEPUTY JUDGE. DURING WORLD WAR II HE SERVED AS A SECRETARY IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND LATER IN THE LEGAL DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY WITH THE GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE IN LONDON.

3. HE JOINED THE FOREIGN SERVICE IN 1945 AND WAS AS-
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SIGNED AS A FIRST SECRETARY IN THE NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

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IN WASHINGTON FROM 1946-48. RECALLED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN 1948 HE HEADED THE OFFICE HANDLING NATO AND DEFENSE. HE TOOK PART IN THE ATLANTIC PACT MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON IN 1949. HE SERVED IN 1950-51 AS CHARGE IN POLAND AND THEN WENT TO STOCKHOLM AS EMBASSY COUNSELOR IN 1951-52. IN 1952 HE WAS NAMED DEPUTY CHIEF OF NORWAY'S PERMANENT DELEGATION TO NATO AND OEEC, SERVING THERE UNTIL HE BECAME AMBASSADOR TO CANADA IN 1955. HE RETURNED IN 1959 AS DIRECTOR OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S POLITICAL AFFAIRS SECTION. HE WAS AMBASSADOR TO SWEDEN FROM 1961 UNTIL HE WENT TO WASHINGTON.

3. GUNNENG IS A POLISHED DIPLOMAT AND A MAN OF MARKED INTELLIGENCE. HE HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING EXTREMELY CONSCIENCIOUS, DISCREET AND VERY WELL INFORMED. HE IS AFFABLE AND FRIENDLY AND HAS AN EASY AND DIRECT MANNER WITH PEOPLE. HE ONCE CONSIDERED A CAREER AS A CONCERT PIANIST AND HE STILL DEVOTES MUCH OF HIS FREE TIME TO PLAYING THE PIANO. HE MARRIED HIS WIFE, INGRID, IN 1939. THEY HAVE THREE DAUGHTERS. GUNNENG SPEAKS ENGLISH, FRENCH AND GERMAN.
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